

Network 2 Receives High Marks

Network 2 has been extremely successful in improving care and service to veterans as indicated in our Performance Measure scores for fiscal year 2003. Of the 60 Performance Measures, Network 2 had 34 measures at the Exceptional level (including cancer screening, wait times, endocrine, cardiac, infectious, tobacco outpatient screening, mental health and outpatient/inpatient satisfaction), 27 measures as VHA best practices, and 43 measures above the VHA national average.

Network 2 was the only Network to achieve exceptional quadrant level for all 6 Quality Indicators (cancer, cardiovascular, endocrine, infectious, mental health, and tobacco).

New Syracuse ED Opens

On November 7, the Syracuse VA Medical Center was rededicated - wrapping up the facility's 50th anniversary events. At the event, a ribbon cutting was held commemorating the completion of the new \$3.8 million Emergency Department (ED). The new ED was officially opened to patients on December 8.



Pictured (from left to right): New York State Senator, **John DeFrancisco**; **Andrew Bobrek**, area representative for The **Honorable James Walsh**, U.S. Congressman; **Dr. Tyndall**; **James Cody**, Syracuse VA Medical Center Director; **Dr. Gregory Eastwood**, President, SUNY Upstate Medical University; and **Dr. Lawrence Flesh**, Network 2 Chief Medical Officer/Deputy Network Director.

Bath Employees Share Holiday Spirit

For the past 15 holiday seasons, employees at the Bath VA have joined with other local organizations and businesses to support the Bath Knights of Columbus #5147 Care and Share program that provides toys and food for local children in need. This year was no exception with the greatest outpouring of Christmas spirit since the program began. A truckload of new toys, five boxes of food, and \$1,690.53 was sent on behalf of the Bath VA.



Pictured (left to right) are some of the coordinators for the Care and Share Program at Bath VAMC: **Sis Conrad**, **Bonnie Brownell**, **Karla Buckley**, **Eileen Thompson**, Grand Knight **Mark Fiordo** (in the Santa hat), **Tammy Holbrook**, **Brian Clark**, **Linda Norton**, and seated is **Sheila Groh**.

Awards and Recognition

- **Margaret Daniels**, Syracuse VA Medical Center's Diagnostics and Therapeutics Care Line Manager was awarded the 2003 Distinguished Service Award from the American Society for Clinical Pathology Board of Registry.
- The Buffalo City Mission received a substantial donation from the Jeffrey Freedman law firm in honor of social worker, **Faith Hoffman**, VA Western New York Healthcare System (VAWNYHS) on behalf of her community-wide efforts in the field of domestic violence education and treatment.
- **Ralph Sirianni**, Recreation Assistant, VAWNYHS was recognized by the Buffalo Police Detectives Association for his volunteer work in providing police sketches. He typically works with rape victims for the Sex Offense Squad and develops an image based on that exchange. His drawings have helped lead to numerous arrests, one being made only 9 hours after the sketch was circulated. He was the only civilian to receive this honor.
- **Karen Strobel**, RN, Nurse Manager at Bath VA Medical Center (VAMC) presented "Implementation of a Fall Prevention Program" at the Sixth Annual Patient Centered Care Symposium at the St. Albans VAMC in Network 3. The poster presentation won first place.
- **Lizabeth Weiss**, Associate Director, Patient Nursing Services, VAWNYHS was elected President of the Western New York Chapter of the Organization of Nurse Executives. She was also named to the National Register's Who's Who in Executives and Professionals, 2004-2005 edition.
- Network 2's wellness programs were highlighted in the VA National Patient Education in Primary Care Newsletter for its inclusion in a White House American Fitness Report as one of three selected prevention initiatives developed in response to the Healthier US executive order, "Activities to Promote Personal Fitness." Members of the team include **Pamela Chester**, Education, Canandaigua; **Dr. Diane Wonch**, Network Patient Education; **John Brown**, Recreational Therapist, Bath; **Neil Relyea**, RN, Network Planetree Coordinator; **Linda Gomes**, Administrative Coordinator for Respiratory Services, Syracuse; and **Bonita Reid**, RN, Cardiology, VAWNYHS.
- Employees of the Albany VA Medical Center marched in the Veterans Day parade as part of project MOVE. Pictured here is some of the group just prior to the parade, sporting the MOVE banner.



VA Launches Kids Web Page

The VA Kids Page (www.va.gov/kids) was launched on Veterans Day. It has been met with overwhelming success and was recently recognized by *USA Today* as a "Best Bet" on the *USA Today* Education Web site for the week of December 3 - 10, 2003.

The Web site has three sections for various audiences: K-5th grade, 6-12th grade, and a special teacher's page. Take a few minutes to check it out. You might be surprised at how much fun it is to learn about the VA!